



IC Leaders Call Diversity “Mission Critical” at Intelligence Community Women’s Summit

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The Office of the Director of National Intelligence sponsored the fourth-annual Intelligence Community Women’s Summit, which was held at the Charles J. Bonaparte Auditorium in the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s Headquarters Building, Washington, D.C., March 31.

The theme of this year’s event was “diversity as a core value,” and the conference opened with remarks from the Director of National Intelligence James R. Clapper.

"Over my 53-plus years in the intelligence business, I’ve watched women rise to leadership positions all around me," he said. "And having women in leadership roles is more critical than people on the outside would think. We’ve found that with almost all the major intelligence failures we’ve had, diversity of thought might have saved us."

Before Clapper finished the opening remarks, the director posed a challenge to the summit attendees.

"I want to put a challenge to this IC Women’s Summit – work through and bring me some concrete measures for developing future leaders, giving equal access to opportunities," said Clapper. "It’s mission-critical that we create an environment in which everyone thrives."

After Clapper concluded his remarks, James B. Comey, the FBI’s director, addressed the standing-room-only crowd next.

"Our credibility and effectiveness take a hit without the great diversity of this country," Comey said.



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Finally, United States Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch provided the keynote address.

“Never doubt your place. In fact, own it,” Lynch said. “All of you are essential to the success of the 16 agencies that make up the Intelligence Community.”

“It’s up to us to shine a light forward for the next generation,” Lynch added.

The IC Women’s Summit also featured a series of panel discussions, with topics such as Leading with Diversity, Diversity of Experiences, Diversity of Workforce, Diversity of Self and Diversity of Relationships.